

monocytes to endothelial cells.

✓ 8. (Amended) Use according to claim 1 for the manufacture of a medicament for the prophylaxis and/or treatment of chronic inflammatory diseases.--

Please add the following claims:

✓ *sub* A, B' --11. (New) A method of reducing the levels of oxidative stress factors in the blood of a mammal comprising administering to a mammal in need thereof an effective amount of a bacterial strain which gives rise to a significant increase in the faecal concentration of propionic acid to said mammal.

12. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein said bacterial strain is a strain of *Lactobacillus* or *Propionibacterium*.

13. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein said bacterial strain is *Lactobacillus plantarum*.

14. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein said bacterial strain is *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v, deposition number DSM 9843.--